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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An illuminator comprising:

a planar light source unit having reflectance of from 50 to 90 % with respect to light in a state in which the light is emitted from a light source provided separately from the planar light source and incident on said planar light source unit; and

a reflective type polarizer disposed on a light exit side of said planar light source unit so that a reflected light component and a transmitted light component of polarized light can be obtained from natural light incident on said reflective type polarizer.

- 2. An illuminator according to claim 1, wherein the reflectance of said planar light source unit is selected to be not lower than 70 % whereas the polarized light reflectance of said reflective type polarizer is selected to be not lower than 40 %.
- 20 3. An illuminator according to claim 1, wherein said reflective type polarizer is one of a linearly polarized light separating sheet and a circularly polarized light separating sheet, said linearly polarized light separating sheet being made of a multilayer laminate of at least two kinds of materials different in refractive index, said circularly polarized light

separating sheet being made of cholesteric liquid-crystal layers.

- 4. An illuminator according to claim 1, wherein said 5 reflective type polarizer is one of a reflective type polarizer having a light-diffusing layer on its light exit side and a reflective type polarizer diffusing transmitted light.
 - 5. A liquid-crystal display device comprising an illuminator according to claim 1, and a liquid-crystal display panel disposed on an upper side of said reflective type polarizer in said illuminator.